Export of Tea from Himachal Pradesh

1867. SHRI ANIL SHARMA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the quantity of tea exported to foreign countries from Himachal Pradesh during the last three years, year-wise;

(b) the amount of foreign exchange earned during this period;

(c) whether it is a fact that export of tea is showing a declining trend; and *

(d) if so, the steps taken by Government to improve this trend?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) and (b) Tea is exported in blended form either in bulk or in packets. In the process, origin of tea is lost at the time of blending and hence export of tea by origin of production cannot be reliably worked out.

(c) and (d) Yes Sir. Export of tea from India during January to September, 1999 has declined by 29.39 mn. kgs as compared to the export during the corresponding period of the previous year.

In order to increase export of tea, the Tea Board is in constant touch with the tea industry to increase production of tea of exportable quality during the current year. Tea Board is interacting with the Russian importers to expeditiously lift tea from India under Debt Repayment Route Protocol as agreed to between both the countries in December 1998.

In addition to the above government and the Tea Board have been analysing country-wise exports of tea giving special attention to areas offering potential. Tea Board also acts to remove bottlenecks in exports to individual markets whenever these are noticed. Certain other steps taken to increase exports of tea include:—

(i) participation in major trade fairs/exhibitions abroad;

(ii) field sampling at speciality stores and in principal markets;

(iii) media campaign to increase consumer awareness of the speciality of Indian teas and to popularise the Tea Board marketing symbol which stands for pure Indian tea;

(iv) exchange of tea delegations between India and tea importing countries.